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ABSTRACT

The development of an international education program should be approached by a community college in the same way as any other program, with consideration of the program's impact on the college as a whole. First, the college should examine its reasons for wanting to start an international education program. These may include a desire to expand students' global understanding and their opportunities for international experiences; to provide professional development for the faculty and staff through travel opportunities; to meet expanding community needs for international skills in trade; to recruit students from other countries into low enrollment programs; and/or to increase the cultural diversity of the community. A community college may approach the development of its international program by adding international components to existing courses, adding new courses to current programs, arranging study tours and student/faculty exchanges, providing on-campus technical assistance training for foreign students, sending staff and faculty abroad to provide technical assistance, increasing foreign student enrollment, and/or offering international expertise to the business community. After establishing the objectives of its international program, the college can begin implementing the program by mobilizing the faculty and staff, involving the community, and seeking funding sources. (MDB)

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HOW A SMALL/RURAL COLLEGE MAY START AND SUSTAIN AN INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

Presentation to:

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Introduction

"International Education" has become a much used term within community college circles, reflecting our awareness of the shrinking world and the global village. While international education can be exciting and mind expanding for both students and staff, any college should approach international education as we approach all other programs -- with consideration for the impact an international education program will have on the total college. To increase the benefits of international education while controlling the problems, the community college might want to begin by asking three questions:

1) Why do you want to start an international education program?

2) What do you want to do in international education?

3) If you decide to start an international education program, where do you begin.

Why Have an International Education Program

Expand Students Global Understanding. There is no question that the world is shrinking. Our students can move quickly across national boundaries. Flights to Latin America and Europe are probably cheaper and easier to make than some of your flights to Las Vegas. Our students come to class in clothes made in Taiwan out of cloth shipped there from India. They wear shoes made in Brazil with leather processed in Italy. The global economy is so intertwined that they will not be able to make informed economic or political decisions without understanding the impact of the global market place. In a world where the value of our student's dollar is related directly to whether or not there's an earthquake in downtown Tokyo, (and it is), we do not need to question the importance of our students having global understanding.

Expand Students's Opportunities for International Experiences. If our students are to understand our international environment, they need to have opportunities for international experience. This can be especially important to community college students, many of whom have seldom ventured

more than 500 miles away from their homes. Providing them with opportunities for international experience not only serves students who take advantage of these opportunities, but also communicates to other students that the world outside our national boundaries is accessible.

Provide Professional Development for the Faculty and Staff. As the community college ages, so do our faculty and staff. The freshness and enthusiasm with which the community college approached problems has always been the cornerstone of our success. The Futures Commission has reminded us that we must continue to cherish our innovative approach to higher education. One way to provide fresh opportunities for our faculty and staff is to provide opportunities for them to travel abroad. The teacher who teaches comparative governments for fifteen years can have a new slant on his curriculum after he has spent a summer abroad experiencing the governmental process of another culture.

Meet Expanding Community Needs for International Skills in Trade. When the community college listens to the business community for guidance in programming, we frequently hear that our business communities need more information on how to be successful in doing business abroad. As communities seek energizing injections into their economy, they are frequently seeking these stimulis from international trade. The community college, by its very nature, can institute business education programs to meet this need.

Seek New Markets for Low Enrollment Programs. There is a direct relationship between decreasing manpower training needs in this country and increasing training needs in another country. The various skills, such as welding, that are needed less in this country are being needed more abroad. We can dismantle our low enrollment training programs or we can look to serve a larger community -- the world community -- by fitting our expertise in training to the growing industries of other nations.

Enrich the Community with Cultural Diversities. We all differ in the degree to which different ethnic groups have been integrated into our communities. In Cedar Rapids, Iowa, we are very heavily European. The cultural richness of ethnic mix is difficult to achieve in an area where less than 1% of the population is non-European. International education programs can attract students from all over the world to your campus. These students in turn can visit civic groups and schools to share with the community their culture.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO

"International education" takes many forms. Before you can decide how to begin an international program, you must look at what you mean by international education. Some of the alternatives are:

Add International Components to Existing Courses. Much of the discussion about internationalizing and the curriculum centers on adding international components to existing courses. For example, a course in economics naturally will include a section on international trade. In the October 19th, 1987 stock market crash, we were reminded of the international nature of our economy. Morning projections of how the stock market in New York would behave were based on what the markets had done in Europe and Tokyo. Such obvious curriculum content is a must in updating current courses.

Add New Courses to Current Programs. Some schools here begun to offer specializations or majors in international education. These may include putting together existing courses -- such as foreign languages, international relations, world history, and international business -- and then adding a few new courses. The outcome can be a new program at little additional cost.

Offer Study Tours. Study tours provide professional development opportunities for the faculty as well as travel experiences for the students. Throughout the country there are private companies that offer study tours, complete with itineraries and guides. Some companies give the instructor considerable leeway in setting up the itinerary. In any case, with a competent guide and carefully considered curriculum, a study tour can link the best experiences of travel with the most creative approach to teaching.

Arrange for Student/Faculty Exchanges. Many institutions abroad are eager to have their faculty teach in our schools. In some instances we can also send our teachers abroad. For example, the Technical Istitute of Budapest offers an engineering program in English. This unique program encourages exchange of English speaking faculty.

Provide Technical Assistance on Campus. Technical assistance on campus has been increasing for community colleges. Developing countries all over the world are discovering that the training they need is best provided by the community college. Technical assistance training may consist of only a week of intense work in operation of hydraulic pumps, or it may include a two year academic program in technical agriculture. Whatever the length of the program, technical assistance training will bring to your campus the brightest and most energetic students a country has. These students can be met by bright and energetic faculty who have watched their own enrollments drop because of economic realities beyond their control.

Send Staff and Faculty Abroad to Provide Training/Consultation. The inverse of technical assistance on campus is sending technical assistance abroad. After years of developing curriculum and focusing on local needs, an instructor can be revitalized by taking the material to another country. Adaptation of content and teaching methods may be frustrating to instructors, but it is also invigorating.

Increase Foreign Student Enrollment. Recruiting foreign students to your own campus is always a challenge. The privately supported students provide a catalyst for faculty exchange on international understanding. Countries typically only send their brightest students. These students recognize their opportunity and demand the best. Their intellect, coupled with the cultural differences, keeps all of us who work with them alert.

Offer International Expertise to the Business Community. On almost every campus we have a resource of people who have lived abroad, have contacts abroad or have knowledge that would help the business community wanting to work abroad. Foreign students themselves can be a resource to consult with business people planning to go abroad to do business. Simple tips on how to greet another business person might mean the difference between making a sale and not making a sale. By focusing on what the needs are of our business community, we can mobilize resources to meet these needs.

HOW DO YOU START AN INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

When you have decided why you want to start an international education program and have concluded what you are going to do, you then start an international program. No matter what you are going to do -- study tours, curriculum development,, setting up exchanges, providing technical assistance -- you approach international education the way you approach any other program at your school:

1) Mobilize the faculty and staff. International education that works comes from an enthusiastic faculty. The entire staff will respond best to international students if they are excited about having them on campus and appreciate the learning experience we can all have from interacting with them. Exchanges and study tours will be successful if we have people who are willing to put in the time to set up these opportunities. Technical Assistance is going to demand that curriculum be re-packaged in a very special way for a very special audience. Entering any of these areas of international education will require staff as excited as the college leaders are about entering into this arena.

2) Involve the community. Introduction of international education to the college will impact the community. If international students are brought on campus -- either as private pay students or for technical assistance -- they will be living and shopping in community. International students can be seen as a resource if you begin early by informing the community of what you are doing and how they can use this resource. It is also helpful to point out how much revenue international students

bring into the area. Being responsible to community concerns will also mobilize the community behind you. As a community college, we don't need to be told the importance of community relations. The best community relations are those that prepare a community for our actions. Involving community representatives in the planning process will help off-set problems later.

3) Seek resources for funding. Some international education programs involve little initial expense to the college. For example, international students who are supported either by their families, their governments, or other funding sources will be revenue bearing. National Endowment for Humanities and grants among others can be used to support curriculum changes, and the United States Information Agency provides funding for student and faculty exchanges. USAID puts out millions of dollars each year in technical assistance training contracts. Resources are available for any school wanting to get into international training. Seeking these avenues of funding for international activities involves the same process as finding funds for other programs. When seeking resources, one should not be misled about the expense of programs. International students require more time and attention than domestic students who are close to their families and friends for support. A cost analysis for internationalizing a program by adding students should include a salary for a foreign student advisor.

SUMMARY

Starting an international education program involves the same process as starting any other program. Once you have decided what you want to do and why you want to do it, there are mirrored resources for how to do it. One of the most important aids to your progress could be AACJC's International/ Intercultural Consortion.

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